

Colonel Abel, Secret Agent, Wows 'Em In Red Spy Film

Moscow, Jan. 5 (Reuters) — Col. Rudolf Abel, the Soviet master spy captured in the United States and exchanged in 1962 for U-2 pilot Gary Powers, appears in a new Soviet movie now playing to packed houses here.

The movie, "The Dead Season," gives an unprecedented glimpse into the work of Soviet intelligence at home and abroad. Its hero is the Russian master spy Gordon Lonsdale, who was exchanged by Britain in 1964 for the British agent, Greville Wynne.

Spied In U.S. 9 Years

Colonel Abel, who spied in the U.S. from 1948 to 1957 when he was arrested and sentenced to 30 years in prison, introduces the movie in a filmed sequence.

According to Colonel Abel, now a gaunt, aging figure working as an instructor of young Soviet agents, the Russian intelligence service welcomed the making of the movie, which was based on "real events."

Action of the movie takes place in an unidentified Western country clearly intended to be England and in the Moscow headquarters of the Committee of State Security, which also directs espionage work.

Together with other recent revelations here of the work of Russian undercover agents abroad, the movie marks a new departure in a country which a few years ago firmly denied that it engaged in espionage against anyone.

Juke Box Cover

The hero is "Konstantin Ladelnikov," an experienced Soviet intelligence resident who uses the name of Lonsfield and runs a firm selling juke boxes as a cover.

Lonsdale used an identical cover. The actor Donatas Banionis who plays Ladeinikov.

Lonsfield also bears a strong physical resemblance to the real-life spy.

Lonsdale's activity was directed mainly against an underwater warfare research station at Portland in southern England. Also in his ring were an American couple, Peter and Helen Kroger, and two British traitors. All but Lonsdale still are serving their sentences.

Finding A Nazi

In "The Dead Season," Lonsfield's mission is to find a former Nazi scientist and war criminal given a new identity and protected from justice by the British to continue working on a lethal killer gas.

The movie shows top Russian intelligence chiefs in their Moscow offices and operation rooms. It also gives a momentary view of a massive communications center with coded information coming in on hundreds of teleprinters from Soviet agents all over the world.

In a final sequence Lonsfield, who was caught and jailed while his partner escaped to Russia with the formula of the poison gas, is exchanged over a lonely frontier bridge for a captured British agent.